

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 02815 200653Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W  
-----115080 200655Z /12/66

R 191125Z AUG 77  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5163  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY SANA  
USCINCEUR  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CONFIDENTIAL KHARTOUM 2815

CORRECTED COPY (TEXT)

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, ET  
SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT ERITREA: WILL IT BE MARXIST?

SUMMARY: SUDANESE OFFICIALS HAVE BEGUN EXPRESS CONCERN OVER  
ANTICIPATED INDEPENDENT MARXIST ERITREAN STATE. MODERATE ARABS  
HAVE BEEN UNABLE UNIFY ERITREAN FACTIONS AND SUDANESE NOW FEAR  
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MARXIST EPLF WILL BE DOMINANT. THEY ALSO FEAR ERITREAN STATE,  
BEING MARXIST DOMINATED, MAY BE SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET INFLUENCE.  
IF THIS HAPPENS, IT WOULD BE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSIDERABLE CONCERN  
TO SUDAN GOV. END SUMMARY

1. WE SENSE A GROWING CONCERN AMONG SUDANESE LEADERS RE  
DIRECTION OF DEVELOPMENTS IN ERITREA. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH

AMBASSADOR AND EMBOFFS, SUDANESE OFFICIALS HAVE INDICATED THEIR CONCERN OVER CONTINUING INABILITY OF ERITREAN FACTIONS TO PUT ASIDE DIFFERENCES. IN ADDITION, THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT, AS INDEPENDENCE APPEARS IMMINENT, MARXISTS WILL BE DOMINANT AND SUDAN COULD BE FACED SOON WITH AN INDEPENDENT MARXIST ERITREAN NEIGHBOR. UNDER CURRENT CONVENTIONAL WISDOM HERE, THIS WOULD MAKE ERITREA SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET INFLUENCE.

2. IN RECENT MEETING NIMEIRI TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HIS PRINCIPAL CONCERN IS SOVIET MOTIVES AND MACHINATIONS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. SIMILARLY, IN RECENT SPEECH TO NATION NIMEIRI EMPHASIZED HIS PRINCIPAL CONCERN WITH ETHIOPIA AND LIBYA WAS DANGER THAT EXISTS FOR SUDAN OF THESE TWO COUNTRIES ACTING ON BEHALF OF SOVIETS. WE KNOW THIS CONCERN ALSO EXISTS WITH RESPECT TO UGANDA, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT PUBLICIZED. THUS, FOR SUDANESE, A MARXIST ERITREA ALMOST BY DEFINITION IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO SOVIET INFLUENCE, IRRESPECTIVE OF SOVIET-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. SUDANESE ARE WORRIED THAT ERITREA, ONCE INDEPENDENT, WOULD BE MORE SIMILAR TO SOUTH YEMEN THAN TO MODERATE ARAB STATES.

3. IN DISCUSSING ERITREAN SITUATION FONMIN OFFICIALS TOLD DCM THAT DOMINANCE OF MARXISTS AMONG ERITREANS HAD RESULTED IN REDUCTION OF SUPPORT FOR ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE FROM SAUDI ARABIA. MINDEF, IN CONVERSATION WITH ECONOFF AUG 18, HSAID THERE WAS NO ONE ON SAUDI SIDE WHO COULD COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH MARXIST EPLF LEADERS. THUS SUDANESE SEE ABSENCE OF MODERATING SAUDI  
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INFLUENCE AND THIS IS MATTER OF SOME CONCERN. AT SAME TIME, SUDANESE OFFICIALS NOTE RADICAL ARABS, NOTABLY IRAQI, CONTINUE THEIR SUPPORT FOR ERITREA.

4. COMMENT: GIVEN OVERALL POLITICAL SITUATION, IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR SUDANESE TO INTERFERE WITH IRAQI OR OTHER RADICAL ARAB ASSISTANCE FOR ERITREANS. THOUGH THEY HAVE TRIED, THEY HAVE NOT BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN PULLING ERITREAN FACTIONS TOGETHER. THEY SEEM, BASED ON THEIR REMARKS, TO BE UNABLE TO PERSUADE SAUDIS TO PLAY MORE ACTIVE ROLE. THUS, SITUATION IS IRONIC. AS ERITREANS APPEAR TO APPROACH INDEPENDENCE, WHICH WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT TRADITIONAL SUDANESE SUPPORT, SUDANESE OFFICIALS, INCLUDING NIMEIRI HIMSELF, SEEM CONCERNED OVER POSSIBLE PROBLEMS WHICH MAY DEVELOP WITH THEIR NEW NEIGHBOR.  
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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PINT, PGOV, MOPS, ET, SU, STATE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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